

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 SSO-00 PM-04 CIAE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 INRE-00 AID-05 OMB-01 ABF-01 TRSE-00 EB-07

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O R 151630Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0000

INFO DOD/ISA

USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L LA PAZ 5663

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, BL

SUBJECT: COMPLETION OF COMMITMENT TO EQUIP TIPO REGIMENTS

REF: A. DOD MSG 042050Z AUG 75

REF B. LA PAZ 4419

1. I HAVE NOTED IN DOD MESSAGE DATED 042050Z AUG 75 A PROPOSED MAP MATERIEL TOTAL OF \$7,950,314 FOR FY 76 AND FY 77. I AM SUBMITTING FOLLOWING INFORMATION BELIEVING THAT THIS FIGURE NEEDS EXPLANATION IN LIGHT OF THE STATEMENT IN LA PAZ 4419 IN WHICH WE ESTIMATED THE TOTAL FIGURE FOR COMPLETING THE TIPO COMMITMENT IN THE CASP TIME FRAME AT \$3,762,939. AS WAS POINTED OUT IN REF B., THE LOWER COST ESTIMATE WAS BASED ON 1974 PRICES AND DID NOT INCLUDE AN INFLATION FACTOR. WHILE THE LARGER FIGURE DOES INCLUDE INFLATIONARY INCREASES, IT ALSO INCLUDES BOTH INDIRECT AND DIRECT SUPPORT ITEMS FOR THE TIPOS.

2. ONE OF THE MAJOR DIFFICULTIES IN ARRIVING AT A FIXED FIGURE FOR COMPLETION OF THE TIPO REGIMENTS IS THE VAGUENESS OF WHAT IS NOW CALLED "OUR ORIGINAL COMMITMENT." DURING THE PAST YEAR, AND INDEED IN PREVIOUS YEARS AS WELL, CHANGES HAVE BEEN MADE IN THE ORGANIZATION AND STAFFING OF THE TIPOS TO CORRESPOND TO NEWER IDEAS AND CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES. FOR
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EXAMPLE, THE MOST RECENT REVISIONS REDUCED THE NUMBER OF

ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIERS PER TIPO FROM TWELVE TO SEVEN AND REDUCED THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL FROM ABOUT 1,370 TO 870 PER TIPO. THE \$3.8 MILLION FIGURE IN REF B. IS A BARE BONES CALCULATION FOR THE PARED DOWN TIPOS AND DOES NOT COVER ITEMS WHICH WE CONSIDER AS LEGITIMATE SUBSTITUTIONS FOR THOSE REDUCTIONS. ANOTHER MAJOR DIFFICULTY AT ARRIVING AT A PRECISE FIGURE IS THE SLOW DELIVERY TIME ON ITEMS FOR THE TIPOS AND THE CONSEQUENT SHARP PRICE INCREASES AS TIME IS SPENT WAITING FOR DELIVERIES. IF THE LEVEL OF FINANCING IS INDEED THE MAJOR CONCERN, THEN I WOULD URGE THAT A VIGOROUS EFFORT BE MADE TO ARRANGE FOR THE HIGHEST POSSIBLE PRIORITY FOR PROVIDING BOLIVIA WITH ALL OF THE ITEMS ON THE MAY 5 LIST SUBMITTED BY THE MILGP IN THE SHORTEST POSSIBLE TIME FRAME. THIS WOULD INSURE A COST WELL WITHIN WHAT WE ANTICIPATE TO BE THE CURRENT MATERIAL LEVELS ESTIMATED BY THE DEPARTMENT.

3. I WOULD PREFER NOT TO STATE A SPECIFIC FIGURE WHICH WOULD BE SUBJECT TO ALL SORTS OF VARIATIONS DUE TO DELAYS, SUBSTITUTIONS BY THE U.S., AND INFLATION, BUT WOULD RATHER HAVE A CONCEPT ACCEPTED BY STATE AND DOD. I BELIEVE THAT WE SHOULD EQUIP THE TIPOS WITH THE MATERIEL LISTED IN THE MILGP MAY 5 LIST, SUBJECT ONLY TO MANDATORY REDUCTIONS IN MAP GRANT MATERIEL FINANCING WHICH COULD THEN BE TAKEN OUT OF THE LOWEST PRIORITY INDIRECT SUPPORT ITEMS. IN OTHER WORDS, THE BARE BONES \$3.8 MILLION SHOULD SERVE AS A BASE TO WHICH THERE SHOULD BE ADDED DIRECT SUPPORT ITEMS, AN ADEQUATE INFLATIONARY FACTOR, AND AS MANY OF THE INDIRECT SUPPORT ITEMS AS CAN BE FINANCED. WITH THE INDIRECT SUPPORT ITEMS THERE ARE SEVERAL BROAD CATEGORIES WHICH INCLUDE COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT, MEDICAL EQUIPMENT, ENGINEERING EQUIPMENT, HELICOPTERS, AND RELATED MAINTENANCE FOR ALL CATEGORIES. IN A SEPARATE MESSAGE IN MILITARY CHANNELS, THE MILGP HAS LISTED THE INDIRECT SUPPORT ITEMS IN WHAT I CONCEIVE TO BE THE MOST REASONABLE PRIORITY ORDER. THUS, I BELIEVE THAT THE CONCEPT SHOULD BE ADOPTED OF DOING THE BEST WE CAN FINANCIALLY TO EQUIP THE TIPOS AS WELL AS WE CAN IN THE CASP TIME FRAME, WITH ONLY NEGOTIATED REDUCTIONS IN THE LEVEL OF FINANCING CAUSED BY ABSOLUTE FINANCIAL RESTRAINTS. REDUCTIONS SHOULD COME FROM THE LOWEST PRIORITY WITHIN THE INDIRECT SUPPORT ITEMS.

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4. I BELIEVE THAT THE ISSUE OF US SUPPORT FOR THE BOLIVIAN TIPOS IS AT A CRUCIAL POINT. I THINK THAT A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING BY STATE AND DOD IS REQUIRED NOW AND THAT ONCE AGREEMENT ON CONCEPT AND FINANCING IS REACHED, EVERY EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE BY BOTH DEPARTMENTS TO PUSH THIS PROGRAM AS RAPIDLY AS POSSIBLE TO ITS COMPLETION.
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